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# UNVEILING OF THE PEN ROSE MEMORIAL STATUE

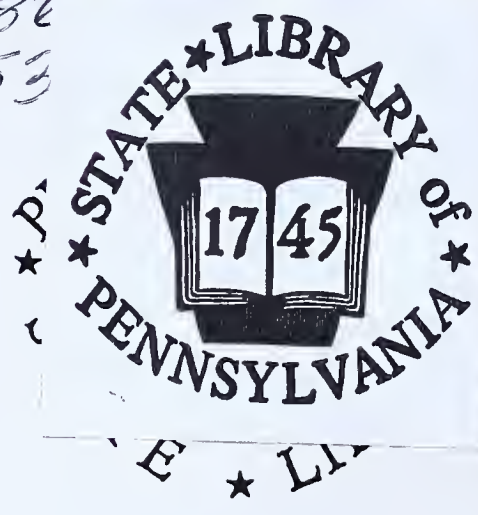
ADDRESS OF  
JOHN S. FISHER

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Fisher, John Stuchell, 1867-  
1940.

Address by Governor Fisher  
at the unveiling of the

For release 2:00 P. M., September 23, 1930.

ADDRESS BY GOVERNOR FISHER AT THE UNVEILING OF  
THE STATUE OF BOIES PENROSE IN CAPITOL PARK, HARRISBURG, PA.,  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1930.

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In the dedication of this monument to the memory and services of the Honorable Boies Penrose we are performing the crowning act of a duty imposed upon us by the Legislature. By Act of 1927 an appropriation of \$20,000 was made to erect a statue to his memory. Primarily, the duty of carrying out this mandate rested with the Department of Property and Supplies, headed by Honorable Benson E. Taylor. However, a committee of distinguished and able men, who were closely associated with Senator Penrose, took over in large measure the task, and this finished work of art is the evidence of their duty lovingly and faithfully performed.

This large gathering of friends and citizens, whose admiration and affection Senator Penrose held in life by the force of his commanding powers of intellect and those fine qualities of character which endeared him to all who were brought into personal relations with him, is in a sense a finer tribute than can be offered in stone and bronze, and raises this occasion above the formalities of an official function. The memory of Boies Penrose as a true and enduring friend and a courteous gentleman always is the magnet that draws us here.

Unhappily, his active career fell in a period when vilification of public men by speech and pen and pencil conveyed to the public, who were unacquainted with the victim, a distorted conception of every quality of person and character. The image of Penrose which his enemies sought to create in the minds of the public was utterly unlike the real man. Many good people who were denied the privilege of knowing him were, of





course, deceived. He had little time from the exacting duties of his office and public employments to disabuse them by going among them and appearing publicly on the speaking platform. When he did, the effect was almost magical. But, in the main, he stuck to his work and left the rancor of faction and partisanship to exhaust itself by its own violence. Undoubtedly he was as sensitive as any other person but he learned to cultivate a spirit of patience and indifference - a little trying to his friends at times - which left him free to carry on with a disposition unclouded by passion and a mind unbalanced by personal grievance. I never knew any man who displayed so much indifference to personal wrongs committed against him as Senator Penrose. I once heard him say that he had become so accustomed to being kicked from the rear that he never turned around to see who was doing it.

Almost nine years have flown by since Senator Penrose closed his long tempestuous and distinguished career. Passions have subsided, party and factional rancor have abated, and the shadows of misunderstanding which enshrouded him in life have been dissipated. The true genius of his nature and the really great qualities of his character and the accomplishments of his public career can now be seen and dispassionately appreciated. Just as this finished work of art truly represents his magnificent physique, so each one of us today who called him friend may raise in our hearts and minds the image of the living Penrose, who walked and talked and labored with us and for us through all the years of his toilsome life.

I like to think of his fine distinguished presence. This statue will preserve that for all time. My first impression of him still lingers. It was in the stormy Republican State Convention of 1896. The issue turned upon the election of a State Chairman. The contest was close and Senator Quay, whose leadership was assailed, as was usual with him in tight pinches, became the candidate of





what was known as the stalwart wing of the party. In the preliminary caucus of the Quay delegates and on the floor of the Convention the young Senator from Philadelphia became the spokesman and floor leader of the Quay forces. He met the best the opposition had to offer, all experienced tacticians and debaters, and triumphed over them completely. It was his Convention speech that won the admiration of the young men of his party, made him known to the people of the State at large, and led to his election to the United States Senate the following year. When I returned from that historic Convention, I told friends back home that I had met the handsomest man I had ever seen, named Penrose. Senator William Flinn, of Pittsburgh, will be remembered as the doughty antagonist of Senator Penrose in that and many later contests. Not so long before the death of Senator Flinn I had the good fortune to meet him at the Duquesne Club at luncheon. In talking over old times, he warmed my heart with his generous tribute to his old foe and wound up by describing him as the handsomest young man he had ever met. Truly, nature lavished on Boies Penrose her rarest gifts of comeliness and manly strength.

But nature went far beyond these superb physical endowments. They were crowned with a mind of extraordinary gifts and strength. There was no weak spot in his mental equipment. Every faculty was up to full measure with every other. His was a beautifully balanced mind. It was perfected by the best training school and university could supply. I have been told that the mother did much to prepare her boys for college and encouraged them in the course of their studies. Whether or not that be the case, we know that Boies Penrose and his brother, the late Doctor Charles Bingham Penrose, author of the law creating our Health Department, graduated from Harvard in the Class of 1881, and that Boies stood second because the first honors went





to Charles. I have heard it said that Charles Penrose had a perfect college record. Being thus gifted and thoroughly prepared, Boies Penrose was animated with honorable ambition and a determination to carve out for himself a successful career. No young man ever left college to face the fitful chances that life has to offer with fairer prospects of success..

It will certainly be of interest and, I trust, of profit to recall some of his distinguishing traits of character. Those qualities have much to do with any man's life, whatever his gifts and opportunities. They are the touches that impart individuality and compose what we term "character." Senator Penrose possessed an abundance of personality.

His manner was ever courteous but reserved with those who had not been admitted to intimacy. He was always easy of access and was frank, open, and truthful with those who approached him on business, politics, or public matters. In the circle of his friends he was one of the most companionable of men. His conversation was a delight and was full of wit and information. There was a peculiar quality of voice and intonation and a piquancy in the use of words and phrases that were peculiarly Penroseian and left his expressions sticking like burs to the memory.

He was gifted with a delicious sense of humor. This was the saving grace that sweetened many bitter experiences. He could dismiss an ugly situation or pass over some act of littleness or meanness or disloyalty with a joke. He had the happy faculty of seeing the ludicrous side of things. A book of highly amusing Penroseian anecdotes could easily have been compiled and yet some ill-informed people thought him solemn and austere because he was not given to peals of loud laughter. His enjoyment was likely to find expression in a quizzical smile. While he was still





a big figure at the National Capitol an unknown author published a book called "The Mirrors of Washington," a rather satirical volume purporting to delineate the leading statesmen of the time. Penrose was given a chapter, written not in an unfriendly vein, but the author held him up as a humorless person and gave in proof an incident which was certainly "mirrorless" in portraying this trait of the Senator. It appeared that one of the well known members of the opposition had imbibed too freely and had come into the Senate with a rather uncertain gait. In his confusion he occupied the seat of Senator Penrose, who was giving his attention on the side to some committee matters. Senator Penrose took in the situation and finally walking down the aisle and addressing the presiding officer most politely requested that the secretary be directed to record the fact that he had not occupied his seat in the Chamber that day. Naturally, this drew the attention of the members and the galleries to the situation and the remark was met with peals of laughter. This was a characteristic Penrose joke but the author of the "Mirrors" thought he merely took this method of getting back his seat, without appreciating the ludicrous circumstance and the embarrassment of his Democratic colleague.

In the best sense of the term, he was a sportsman. He had the spirit of play, although little time to indulge in games, such as golf and the like. He longed for the sea and the mountains and the woods. He liked yachting and fishing and hunting. After a hard siege of work, he wanted to get away where he could relax and enjoy the beauties of nature. One of his favorite haunts in earlier years was the Jackson Hole country in Wyoming. He told me that he had spent weeks at a time living in the open and riding that gorgeously wild and rugged region. Later on in some of my visits to the same region I ran across traces of him. I took





the liberty of asking him why he had discontinued going to "The Hole" and he said that the place had become too civilized. At that time it took only two days to ride in from civilization. It was this quality in him that led to his keen interest in the establishment of departments to restore wild life and forests throughout the State and Nation. Here in Pennsylvania he was ably assisted by his brother, Doctor Penrose, who served so long on the State Game Commission and did so much to set up the system of game refuges. We have not forgotten Senator Penrose's addresses in the interest of conservation and the great influence he wielded in bringing about the proper legislation.

He was possessed of tireless energy and a zeal for work. He never left a job half done. The bigger it was, the greater was the challenge to his energies. He mastered every phase. He dug out every detail. This accounts for the soundness of his judgment on matters of legislation and administration. This trait was manifested early in his career when he took the laboring oar in collaboration with his partner, Mr. Allison, in writing the history of the corporate development of Philadelphia. That work was done so thoroughly that no finishing touches have ever been found necessary. In the course of his research he found the original charter of the City, now regarded as a priceless treasure. This book is an authority and is still the resort of students on municipal subjects. Again, at the very height of his career, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Post Offices, we see him plunging into a self imposed three-year task in the investigation of the entire Post Office system. No similar work approaches this in its vastness of scope and detail.





It resulted in the reorganization of the entire administration of the Post Offices of the United States. Its good results are still in force and effect. And to mention just one more illustration, may I call attention to his part in the preparation of the three tariff bills while he was either Chairman or minority leader of the Senate Committee of Finance. None of his colleagues approached him in the mastery of the schedules of the revenue laws and their influence on the finances of the Government and the business of the country. No Senator has ever surpassed him in this respect. Those of us who have seen him in his office, surrounded by a staff of twelve or fifteen secretaries, all working like mad, know how he poured out the exuberance of his great strength in the service of his constituents.

He was broad-minded and tolerant of the views of others. This was manifested both in his leadership of party in the State and Nation and in his attitude toward colleagues and rivals who differed with him on public and political issues. During his entire tenure of leadership he never once arbitrarily dictated the selection of party candidates or the issues to be advanced in platforms or party declarations. He acted only after wide consultation with others who had a right to a voice and whose opinions were entitled to respect. Among his fellow members of the Senate he had no personal enemies and many warm friends, even in the opposition ranks. This was because of his tolerant and open-minded attitude. Only on a few occasions was he ever the object of personal attack. We recall the rather vicious assault of the elder LaFollette and Penrose's withering reply, in which he spoke of the Wisconsin statesman as the Doctor Munyon of politics who sought to apply patent nostrums to all the ills of the Nation. Immediately afterwards he repented these remarks and asked that they be stricken from the journal. In doing so he made a lifelong friend of



one who had been a bitter political enemy. During the World War, Senator Stone, partisan Democrat of Missouri, in a studied address, charged Penrose and ex-President Roosevelt with party activities to the embarrassment of the conduct of the war. Penrose was credited with being the national leader of the Republicans. In his extemporized answer, Penrose expressed surprise at the mildness of his indictment as a loyal party man, begged the privilege of pleading guilty to every item, and took occasion to emphasize his sense of political loyalty. But he went on to say,

"There are many things that could be mentioned by way of criticism of the present Administration that, in my opinion, would bring vastly beneficial results to the country during the present war crisis; but I have kept scrupulously silent in this body, not wanting to embarrass the Administration in any way, and, with one or two exceptions, voted for every measure that was submitted by the various departments, in most cases against my judgment and my private opinion, simply to give them every opportunity to succeed."

These words exactly express his habitual attitude of subordinating his own views and interests to his sense of public duty. Numberless proofs of a similar nature might be recalled.

If I were asked to point out the dominant quality of his character, I should unhesitatingly answer "courage." Conscious of his superior strength and the power of his position, he never needlessly sought a quarrel or raised controversial issues for party or factious advantage. Nor did he ever fail to accept a challenge, whether offered without or within the party or by individuals or combinations of individuals. He counted not the odds if he believed in his cause and the rectitude of his course. In a great crisis





he was never scared by the spectre of possible defeat. It was this stout-heartedness that won the devoted loyalty of his followers and the respect and often the admiration of his foes. In the famous Pennypacker-Elkin gubernatorial contest Penrose was the field marshal for Senator Quay, who was backing Judge Pennypacker. Those of us who were regarded as the younger element in the party were adherents of Elkin and went down to a defeat not altogether inglorious. After the battle was over Mr. Elkin said to me that "Boies Penrose is the boldest, most lion-hearted man I have ever met." It is needless to say that the breach between the two was eventually completely closed. Owen Wister has recently written a most interesting book on Roosevelt, in which he refers to Penrose. He credits Senator Penrose with the defeat of Roosevelt in 1912. After that disastrous rift, he quotes Roosevelt as saying of Senator Penrose, "I like that big buccaneer." The book is right in claiming that Penrose was willing to join in nominating Roosevelt in 1916, for he advanced such a proposal to certain members of the Pennsylvania delegation. The old breach was not yet sufficiently healed for the success of such a move, but I believe that had Colonel Roosevelt lived, Penrose would have backed him for the Republican nomination for President in 1920. It was the fighting quality in each of these two men that led to a mutual regard, never completely broken, even in the hectic days of 1912, and which drew them together again after those stormy days had drifted by.

It is pleasant to dwell on the personal side of Senator Penrose, but the memorial we dedicate today is the tribute of the Commonwealth he loved and honored to his unusual public services. It is appropriate at this time that we briefly recount the steps in his brilliant career that opened with his election to the Legislature in 1884 and continued





in unbroken succession until he closed his eyes in the last long sleep on December 31, 1921, clothed with the highest dignities and powers his fellow citizens could bestow.

In the earlier days of the Republic it was not unusual for young men to come to the fore rapidly. Things were then in the making and stirred into action the bounding spirit and boundless faith and confidence of youth. The framing of the Federal Constitution called forth the creative genius of Hamilton and Madison and Pinckney when they had not yet reached an average age of thirty. Patrick Henry, Jefferson, Marshall, both the Adamses, Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and many others of little less renown, had attained national repute when still in their thirties. But in the day of Boies Penrose things had settled down and youth was compelled to fight for its place on the top rung. This was especially true with our conservative people, yet this young man broke through all barriers and reached the summit of his official dignities when only thirty-seven years of age. He proved that the young man still has his chance.

Once launched upon his career his progress was rapid and at times dazzling. There is inspiration even in the chronology of his advancement. Three years after graduation from college and one year after admission to the Bar, he is elected a member of the House of Representatives in the General Assembly. Two years later, in 1886, he is advanced to the State Senate, to which he is twice re-elected, serving as President pro tempore in the memorable sessions of 1889 and 1891. While still serving in that body he is chosen by his fellow members of the Legislature to succeed the distinguished Honorable J. Donald Cameron as the representative of Pennsylvania in the United States Senate. Thrice he is re-elected. Of his four elections, twice was by the Legislature and twice by popular vote. His political strength was subjected to



every test. In both State and National legislative bodies, he held committee assignments of the highest importance and unobtrusively performed a prodigious amount of labor. At various times he held Chairmanships of four United States Senate Committees, serving at the head of the Committees on Additional Accommodations for the Library of Congress, Post Offices and Post Roads, Immigration, and finally Finance. In the latter Chairmanship he succeeded Senator Aldrich and automatically became the leader of the Republicans in the Senate. The extent and variety of his service is apparent from his membership on the Committees on Naval Affairs, Commerce, Education and Labor, Railroads, Public Expenditures, Banking and Currency, Public Health and National Quarantine, Expenditures in the Department of State, and Expenditures in the Post Office Department.

While carrying this heavy official load, his services to the political party of his choice were no less onerous and distinguished. In 1903 he became Chairman of the State Republican Committee and from that time maintained his party supremacy until his death, with the exception of the upheaval of 1912, when he lost temporary control. His membership in the National Republican Committee began in 1904 and was continuous with but one interruption. He was a delegate to the National Republican Conventions of 1900, 1904, 1908, 1916 and 1920. Whether a delegate or not he exercised a powerful influence in formulating platforms and selecting standard bearers, beginning with the Convention which nominated McKinley in 1896.

By many of his admirers it has been thought that his activity in party management somewhat obscured his reputation as a statesman. I incline to the belief that had he been free to devote all his energies and talents to his duties in the Senate he would have added a lustre to his name





that would not have been outshone by any other member in the history of that august body. And then it must be remembered that party leadership was thrust upon him and was not of his own seeking. He simply accepted its responsibilities as a call to duty. It was his fidelity to the trust thus imposed that maintained his sway over his party for a longer time that was ever wielded by any other State leader.

His reputation, in the last analysis, must rest upon his achievements as a legislator. In the field of legislation his labors bore abundant and enduring fruitage. No specific reference can here be made to the multitude of enactments in the Legislature and in Congress which bore the stamp of his <sup>authorship</sup> ~~leadership~~ or had the needful support of his influence. That duty must be left to the leisurcly pen of the painstaking biographer who will sooner or later perform that labor of love. We can only note the general trend of the measures he sponsored or advocated. His general attitude was determined by the spirit of the times in which he lived and the conditions of life with which he was familiar. He witnessed three of the greatest epoch making events in our new world - perhaps in the entire world. He opened his conscious life upon the scenes of the Civil War; he entered the United States Senate just in time to participate in the measures incident to the Spanish-American War; he reached the zenith of his career and abilities to give of his best to his country under the heart rending strain of the World War. He absorbed his patriotic devotion in youth and lived it in his ripened years. The great weight of his influence was consequently always on the side of those measures which tended to safeguard and make serviceable the constitutional powers of government, to consolidate and strengthen the bonds of the union of our States, and to adjust and expand the laws to meet the ever changing conditions flowing from the exigencies





of war and the transforming influences of modern life. His face was set against all sectionalism, class distinctions, and whatever tended to undermine and destroy our American institutions and laws. He always faced his flag when on duty.

In the compass of his life he was witness to the evolutionary changes in the business world. He fully comprehended their significance and wisely sought to weave their influences into the political and social fabrics of the times. With such a background it was but natural that his thoughts should be focused on measures for the protection and advancement of labor, the largest and most important factor in organized industry. He believed that general prosperity depended on the working man and that he was most valuable to industry and society when given reasonable working hours, safe and sanitary conditions while on the job, and good wages for a fair day. To him belongs the credit of writing and pushing through the law establishing the State Factory Inspector's Department, now enlarged into the Department of Labor and Industry. It was an advanced step and was vigorously opposed and attacked in the courts. But it stood the test and was followed by a long succession of kindred humane enactments, such as semi-monthly pay in lawful money, the protection of women and children in industry, the health and safety of the anthracite and bituminous coal miners, the safeguarding of tenement workers, the arbitration of labor disputes, the adoption and protection of union trademarks and labels, the granting of workmen's compensation, and the establishment of the State Workmen's Insurance Fund. These and many similar measures had his approval and substantial support. In Congress he espoused numerous counterparts and his aid is still gratefully remembered by the Post Office employees and the railway and telegraph operators for the Eight Hour Law, and, by all



who work for a living, for the bill creating the Federal Department of Labor.

Likewise, we may expect him to champion the cause of good business and sound economics, as he always did. He was a profound believer in the resources of America and sought to develop them in full for the expansion of industry and trade and the employment of labor and capital. He knew that one of the essentials to attain this end was a sound banking system with a currency that was flexible, ample, and stable in value. And so we find him arrayed against the "Free Silver" heresy and all forms of cheap money. The defeat of Mr. Bryan settled the money question. Then came the struggle for a national banking system that was really national in extent and power. This need had been in the minds of statesmen and financiers since the time Alexander Hamilton submitted his well organized plan for a national bank, and had persisted, although unsuccessfully, until the pressure of the World War broke down all opposition. Senator Aldrich had given the best of his life in the preparation of suitable legislation. He was ably assisted and supported by Penrose, but party and sectional opposition had defeated their efforts. When Woodrow Wilson became President, be it remembered to his everlasting credit, he reversed the ancient policy of his party, and with the aid of Republican Senators like Penrose and his associates, set up the Federal Reserve Bank, which made the financing of the World War a possibility and assures for all time to the United States a banking system stable as the Government itself and ample for the needs of every form of business.

The same motive prompted him to champion the protective tariff. His views and labors in connection with the tariff are too fresh in our memories to need amplification. It is sufficient to recall that he became, and for years continued to be, the commanding influence in support of the





protective principle in the levying of import duties. However, he applied this principle always in a reasonable measure. He did not seek to erect around America a "Chinese Wall" against world trade. He fully realized the importance of keeping open the channels of commerce with foreign nations. But his endeavors were directed to the establishment of tariff rates sufficiently high to equalize the difference in the cost of production between the imported and the domestic article. He held this to be absolutely essential to the maintenance of the American wage scale as against the cheap wage paid in foreign competing countries. Neither did he believe the tariff to be a local issue. He wanted its benefits spread equally and impartially throughout the Nation and to every form of industry. He did not ask favors for his constituents that he was unwilling to extend to the citizens of every other State. He will long be remembered as the master of sane tariff legislation.

And may I touch just one more point in his career as a lawmaker. As I have intimated, he was sensitive to the great social and economic changes wrought by modern industrial methods and processes and keenly alive to the necessity of expanding governmental authority to regulate and control the new order of affairs. He was not a reactionary who opposed every move to advance the Government in harmony with the progress of business, nor was he a radical who would apply hampering and destructive methods to arrest the initiative and progress of an energized and enlightened people. His methods were rather of the deliberate, sane, sure order that looked to results with the least amount of disturbance and injury to the existing state of affairs. And in this spirit his hand was felt in the establishment, as I have said, of our Factory Inspection Department, now elaborated into the great Department of Labor and Industry, which





jealously guards the safety of every industrial worker in the Commonwealth. It was also directly felt in the creation of the Forestry, Health, Highway, and Welfare Departments, and equally so in the expansion of other Departments as occasion demanded. The United States Department of Labor stands as his monument to the workers of America. In whatever affected the prosperity and welfare of the people he effectively asserted the powers of his office and position in line with a progress marked by moderation. This attitude will be apparent to anyone who will examine his record in the Senate on legislation affecting railroads, merchant marine, telegraph and telephones, inland and coastal navigation, rivers and harbors, internal improvements, irrigation, national parks, conservation, and other measures of a like character. The scope of these activities mark him as a statesman of wide sympathies and wise actions.

And so, Senator Grundy, we accept from you, Chairman of the Committee in Charge, this monument as a lasting memorial to a great Pennsylvanian and a great Senator. You and your fellow members have discharged your duty in such manner as to merit the commendation of the Commonwealth for which you acted. I make grateful acknowledgment of your services and, as Governor, accept this monument from your hands to be the perpetual property and solicitous care of the people who authorized its erection. I now transfer it to Honorable Benson E. Taylor, Secretary of the Department of Property and Supplies, to be protected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of law.

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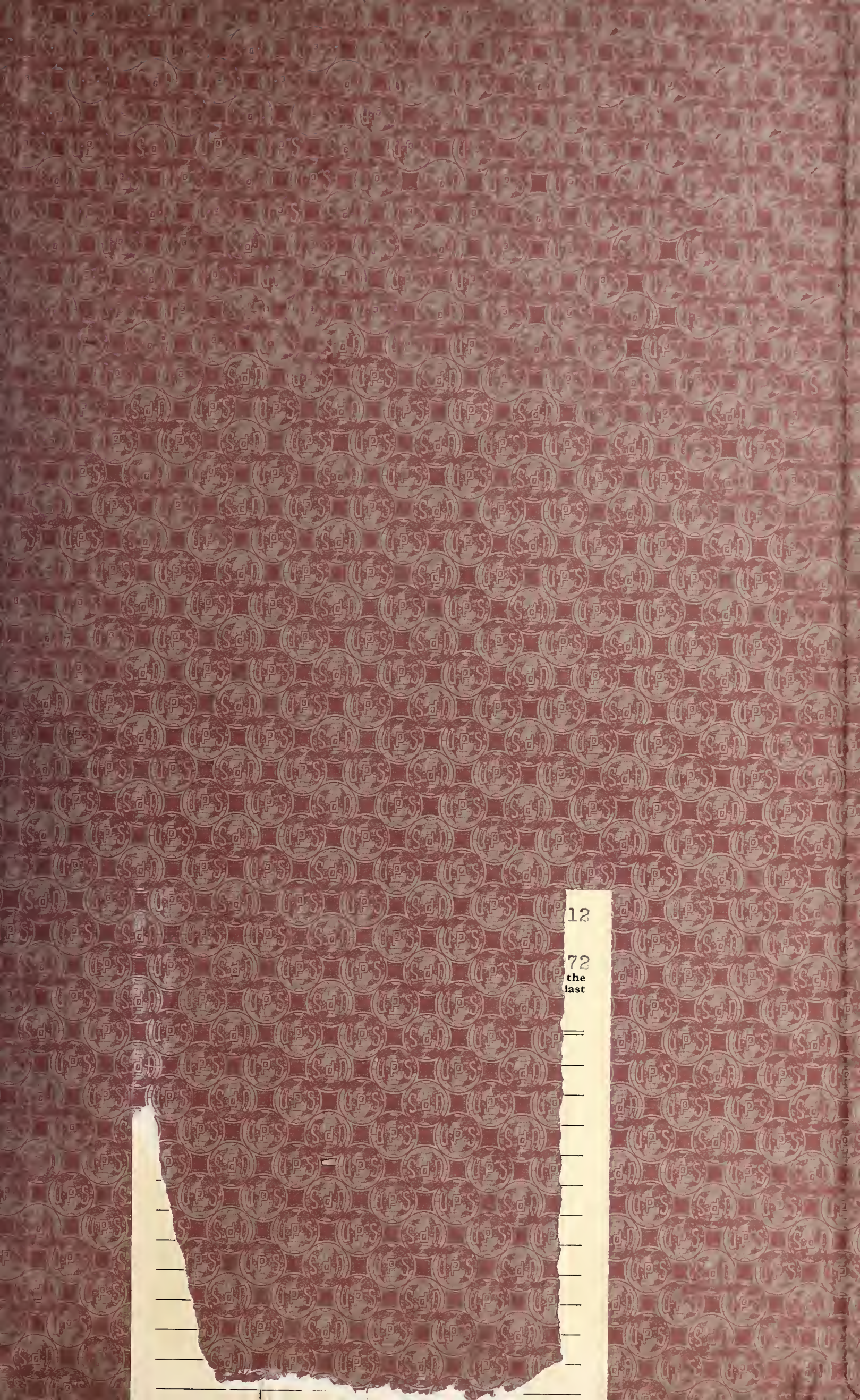
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